



Sustainable Urban Planning & Territorial Management: future challenges in a world in transition

Proceedings of the SUPTM 2024 conference

*S. García-Ayllón
& J.L. Miralles
Editors*



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SECOND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON FUTURE CHALLENGES
IN SUSTAINABLE URBAN PLANNING & TERRITORIAL MANAGEMENT

SUPTM 2024

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The Technical University of Cartagena is an institution with an unwavering commitment to sustainability, the environment, urban studies and proper land-use planning. Hosting the second international conference on the challenges of the 21st-century in urban planning and land management, SUPTM 2024, is a privilege for us as a scientific and academic institution.

As one of the four technical universities in Spain, our students and researchers are deeply engaged in these disciplines through various academic programmes and research initiatives. City design, urban mobility, environmental and territorial planning, and natural disaster management, such as flood control and preservation of coastal space, are areas where our institution excels nationally and internationally. Every year, we graduate numerous professionals who bring their expertise to diverse fields.

Research in these critical areas is essential for the future of the planet and must be prioritised by society, supported by public administrations, and disseminated to industries through knowledge transfer. I reaffirm our institution's unwavering commitment to participating in international knowledge sharing events, which empower our researchers and facilitate collaboration with peers.

I am confident that this conference marks the beginning of a series of meetings that will drive progress towards our planet's sustainable development goals.

Beatriz Miguel
Rector of the Technical University of Cartagena



It is a pride for the city of Cartagena to host this second international conference on challenges in urban planning and land management SUPTM 2024. The city of Cartagena, as the cradle of a three-thousand-year-old civilization, is a historical reference in terms of architecture and urban planning. However, we are not resigned to living from our past, but rather we are committed to a future in which innovation and research are the spearhead to help move our society forward.

In this sense, our city is a reference in sustainable urban mobility, environmental planning and innovative architecture, incorporating researchers and professionals of the highest prestige into our projects. These projects have placed our city in a vanguard position in many of the topics that will be discussed during these days in this congress. In this sense, I am convinced that the results of this meeting will be very useful and will help our cities and territories to advance along the path of sustainable development.

I am confident that the success of this first call is only the beginning of new meetings in the future that will consolidate our city as a benchmark in terms of research on urban planning and land-use planning. And I am sure that in the near future, the more than 200 researchers from the five continents who will meet electronically these days, will be able to come and see our wonderful city in person at the next edition of the congress, which we will be happy to invite you to.

Noelia Arroyo
Mayor of Cartagena



PREFACE

For many years now, the scientific community has warned of the need to evolve the social and economic activities of our societies around the world towards a situation of ecological balance with the ecosystems that produce the environmental services that these activities consume. And this, in addition, maintaining a fair distribution of wealth so that the evolution towards that ecological balance does not generate greater differences in economic development between the different countries of the planet. This is the great challenge that humanity faces in the coming decades.



Furthermore, every social or economic activity generates its own land demand for associated uses in the city and territory, sometimes competing with ecosystem uses that generate essential environmental services or altering them and modifying the urban and territorial morphology and landscape.



According to the United Nations, the urban population will concentrate up to 70% in urban areas in the coming years, and this means, as many authors highlight, that the economic and social transformation towards a sustainable society, and the achievement the United Nations SDG, it will only be managed if sustainable cities are achieved in ecological balance with the territory that provides essential environmental services.

In this context, the 2nd International Conference on Future Challenges in Sustainable Urban Planning & Territorial Management (SUPTM 2024), whose proceedings are published in this book, wants to be a scientific contribution to the great challenge of sustainability that humanity faces in the coming decades. A space for thought, the exchange of experiences and action.

In the process towards an economic activity based on ecological balance, urban and territorial planning is an essential and irreplaceable instrument since, unlike other areas of the economy in which errors in the production of goods and services can be corrected, in the field of the location of uses and activities in the city and the territory, mistakes in said decisions either cannot be corrected or their correction is very economically expensive and requires a lot of time. Therefore, it is, in any case, better to prevent through urban and territorial planning to guarantee the maintenance of the production of environmental services. The poor planning of activities, such as developing industrial or a tourist areas in zones where essential

environmental services are produced, implies a territorial transformation that is practically unaffordable or even impossible to reverse, and consequently a production loss of environmental services. A sustainable urban and territorial planning is only possible if there is simultaneously an administrative organization able to enforcing it, especially in its environmental dimensions, and particularly the protection of areas with some environmental values, locating urban developments in areas compatible with the maintenance of said ecological assets.

The researchers who deal with urban and territorial sustainability in any of its many facets is very aware of this, as is evident in the high participation that has occurred in this conference as well as in the great variety of topics discussed. It is therefore evident, on a global scale, of the great concern that exists in humanity about these issues and, at the same time, it shows the need to share knowledge, experiences, analysis, proposals... In our scientific field, knowledge is often generated locally as a way to generate universal rules. Local analysis and experiences allow us to learn about similar situations in societies that apparently are very different, and to generate global knowledge.

Urban and territorial sustainability will be global, or it will not be. The major environmental problems that exist on our only planet require, in many cases, comprehensive global solutions. In this framework, research in our field plays a fundamental role. As an example, aspects such as the emission of greenhouse gases, which in a significant part occur in the transportation sector, require a transition towards widespread sustainable mobility. And of course, these transformation processes should not produce an increase in wealth differences between the different countries of the world.

A huge job to do, a huge task ahead, a great challenge that humanity has never faced. Our collective, with the contributions of our research, plays an essential role.

At the same time, many scholars and scientists who share their research in this conference are academics who also fulfill the function of transmitting the acquired knowledge to new generations. Again, in this area we also face a great challenge. It is the challenge of global learning thorough systems such as Collaborative Online International Learning, so that new generations learn to live and share with students from any other university in the world, and to address global challenges collaboratively, thus generating a New Ecological Paradigm global.

We hope that humanity will be able to generate and apply the knowledge that constitutes this New Ecological Paradigme to achieve a balanced world in its economic development that must necessarily be based on a local and global ecological balance.

Salvador García-Ayllón & José Luis Miralles
Chairs of the SUPTM 2024 conference

CONTENTS

INSTITUTIONAL GREETINGS

Beatriz Miguel. <i>Rector of the Technical University of Cartagena</i>	4
Noelia Arroyo. <i>Mayor of the city of Cartagena</i>	5

PREFACE

Salvador García-Ayllón & José Luis Miralles. <i>Chairs of the SUPTM 2024</i>	6
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KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Prof. Juan Luis de las Rivas. <i>University of Valladolid (opening lecture)</i>	14
Prof. Thaddeus Pawlowski. <i>University of Columbia (closure lecture)</i>	18

CONFERENCE SESSIONS

CITY PLANNING SESSIONS

Diego Antonelli, Saverio Azzato, Markus Elkatsha, Elle-Marie Defrain, Luis Alberto Alonso Pastor and Kent Larson. *Predicting Behavioral Changes as a result of land-use Modifications in Auto-Centric Communities: Data-Driven Mobility Choice Modeling for Dallas TX*

Sabrina Lai and Corrado Zoppi. *Elements impacting the provision of ecosystem services that regulate urban environments*

Chinnu S Kumar and Pooja Nigam. *Spatial Schematic Model of Indian Colonial Port City: Drawing Parallels for Kochi from Existing Models*

Amisha Thakur and Anuradha Banerjee. *Embracing the Intangible Heritage: Preserving Local Characteristics in Urban Re-generation of Shimla City, India*

Lamíquiz-Daudén, Patxi J., Baquero, María Teresa and Martín, Juan Carlos. *Integrating proximity-centred accessibility policies in the Governance of Local authorities in Spain*

João Gilberto Mendes dos Reis, Gabriel Santos Rodrigues, Elton Gil Rosa Muachambi, Izolina Margarida de Souza, Mayara Neves Pohlmann, Marcos Roberto Buri, Salvatore Binasco Lengua, and Jonatas Santos de Souza. *The Development of Bus Rapid Transit in Latin America: A review*

Dmytro Legeyda. *A multi-level city for coexistence with nature.*

Alba Ramírez-Saiz, Delfín Jiménez-Martín, Daniel Navas-Carrillo. *Inclusive proximity for people of different ages and abilities: the case study of Madrid.*

Teresa Ibargoyen, Markus Elkatsha, Pablo Barrenechea, Luis Alonso and Kent Larson. *Assessing Amenities Requirements: A Methodology for Quantifying Demand, Space Requirements, and Distance for a Given Community*

Pablo Rico-Pinazo, Daniel Navas-Carrillo and María José Márquez-Ballesteros. *Tools for implementing the European Green Deal in cities. Defining a sustainable urban mobility indicator*

Gabriel Santos Rodrigues, João Gilberto Mendes dos Reis, Sivanilza Teixeira Machado and Acácio Pereira de Macedo Neto. *Analysis of the substitution of Diesel Buses by Electric ones in Rapid Systems: An application of the methodology in Expresso Tiradentes - São Paulo – Brazil.*

Arpan Shil, Kanak Kanti Saha and Amit Chowdhury. *Evaluating Sidewalk-Based Informal Urban Spaces in the Context of Chittagong City*

Annamaria Felli and Francesco Zullo. *The importance of urban regeneration actions: European and Italian legislative framework analysis*

Edgar Bustamante-Picón, Fernando M. García Martín, Yolanda Pérez-Albert and Joan Alberich González. *Accessibility to urban green spaces in the city of Cartagena (Spain)*

Ola Qasseer. *Where is the Center? An Approach for Defining the Locations of Central Urban Areas through Transportation Networks*

Maria Konstantinidou and Josep Maria Salanova Grau. *A methodology for using dynamic visualizations to enhance citizens engagement in mobility planning in Thessaloniki*

María Teresa Baquero Larriva and Francisco Lámiquiz. *Flowers of proximity in Spain: understanding local context priorities*

Newsha Salari, Leandro Madrazo. *Community Participation and Sustainable Outcomes in Slum Upgrading: A Case Study of Medellin.*

Anjali Saraswat, Satish Pipralia and Ashwani Kumar. *Evaluating Urban Sustainability Assessment Methods: A Path Towards Sustainable Cities*

Giulia Xisto, Roberto Schoproni Bichueti, Jordana Marques Kneipp, Clandia Maffini Gomes, Walter Leal. *Global Smart Cities And The Conditions For Urban Attractiveness*

Zahra Behrouzmoghadam and Ali Maddahi. *Forecasting the Growth and Urban Development Patterns in Bojnourd City*

Celio Daroncho and Pedro José Perez Martinez. *Traffic Behavior on São Paulo's Streets: A Post-Pandemic Study*

Chioma Agatha John-Nsa. *Tapping the Hidden Potentials: Impact of Street Vending on Urban Mobility across Three Socio-Economic Groups of Enugu Metropolis, Nigeria*

Lucas Santos de Queiroz, Alexandre Formigoni, Edson Company Colalto Junior, Rosinei Batista Ribeiro and Eliacy Cavalcanti Lélis. *Analysis Of Urban Cycle Mobility: A Study On The Extension Of The Bike Lane On Avenue Águia de Haia to The A.E. Carvalho Terminal And Artur Alvim Subway And Its Infrastructure*

Francesca Leccis. *Overtourism: How the city of Cagliari is losing its soul*

Rushikesh Kolte, Shipra Goswami, Ashwani Kumar and Satish Pipralia. *Safeguarding Urban Resilience: A Critical Review of Norms and Regulations in Indian Cities*

Shina Sad Berenji and Neda Farsiastaneh. *Studying the current Iranian residential building pattern, focusing particular attention on the proportion and arrangement of open and enclosed areas, and making recommendations for creating more sustainable cities*

Neetika Mahajan and Sailaja Nandigama. *Knowledge, Perception, and Participation in the making of Smart Cities: A case study of Chandigarh.*

Izolina Margarida de Souza, João Gilberto Mendes dos Reis. *The importance of IoS (internet of services) for urban mobility, with emphasis on the shared bicycle service in São Paulo city, Brazil.*

Pablo Rico-Pinazo, María José Márquez-Ballesteros and Daniel Navas-Carrillo. *Mapping and selection of criteria for comprehensive rehabilitation of mass housing neighborhoods*

TERRITORIAL MANAGEMENT SESSIONS

Russell M. Smith. *Spatial Justice and Local Government Boundary Change: Battles for Borders, Boundaries and Place*

Annunziata Palermo, Lucia Chieffallo and Sara Virgilio. *Towards the Smart Tourist Land Model for the enhancement of inner areas' unexpressed potential*

Emilio Marziali, Gianni Di Pietro and Cristina Montaldi. *Urban planning tool and flood risk: A difficult relationship in Italy*

Giulia Fernanda and Grazia Catania. *Transformation of cities into smart territories: how to promote sustainable development, social inclusion, and quality of life in these different territories' realities.*

Ángela Franco. *Urban policies during the last four decades and the risk of flooding in Cartagena (Spain): A retrospective spatial analysis*

Davide Pezzulo. *The 15-Minute City Concept: A Vision for Accessible and Sustainable Urban Living*

Alberto Matarán Ruiz, Josefa Sánchez Contreras, Roser Manzanera, Adolfo Torres, Juan Francisco Bejarano, José María López Medina, Rafael Fuentes-Guerra Soldevilla, Santiago Ruiz and Andrea Iglesias. *Healthy Municipal Soils EU Horizon: a participatory methodology based on the biodistrict approach for municipalities*

Anna Serra-Llobet. *Why we call it "climate change" when we mean "environmental change"? The urgent need to reframe natural hazards policy and research for effective, sustainable and equitable flood risk reduction.*

Mara Ladu and Ginevra Balletto. *Health services and Network analysis to assess the spatial accessibility (Sardinia, Italy)*

Celestina Fazia. *What contributions does the rural and peri-urban system offer to make the city and territory resilient?*

Santiago Madrigal-Martínez. *Collaborative governance for good management, conservation, restoration, and enhancement practices in (peri-)urban ecosystems*

ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING SESSIONS

Samuel Aires Master Lazaro. *Sustainable Urban Planning in Mozambique: An Assessment of Environmental and Social Considerations in Southern Regions*

Annunziata Palermo and Lucia Chieffallo. *A literature-based climate change risk analysis framework in urban, rural and coastal areas*

Rafael Córdoba Hernández and Federico Camerin. *Taking into account the risks identified in the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment. A methodological proposal for the protection of land through the Spanish planning system*

Gabriel Rodrigues, Acácio Macêdo Neto, Izolina de Souza, João Reis, Joel Alves, Jonatas de Souza, Kennya Queiroz, Márcio de Antonio and Robson Jeremias. *Electromobility in Bus Transport Public in Latin America: A Social Network Analysis Approach in 28 Latin America cities and Metropolitan Region of Sao Paulo, Brazil*

Xavier Baño and Rosa Ma Alsina-Pagès. *"Sons al Balcó", a Social Technology Transfer Project Design for Citizen Science and Awareness*

Salvador García-Ayllón and Matías Yepes. *Implementation of a low emissions zone through soft traffic calming measures: the case study of Cartagena (Spain)*

Celestina Fazia and Federica Sortino. *Natural metabolism and ecosystem services in rural areas for resilience*

Mahdi Gheitasi, Yolanda Perez Albert, and David Serrano Gine. *Assessing Technological Risk and Landscape Perception in Tehran Oil Refinery: A PPGIS Study*

Federica Sortino, Giulia Fernanda Grazia Catania, Celestina Fazia. *Regeneration of sensitive areas as an opportunity to enact policies of urban democracy and social justice*

Carolina Salvo and Alessandro Vitale. *Towards Informed Disaster Management Planning: An Approach to Predict Future Urban Hazard Exposure (Spain)*

Neda Farsiastaneh and Shina Sad Berenji. *Promotion of environmental justice with the approach of strengthening interaction in the urban landscape*

Celio Daroncho and Pedro José Perez Martinez. *Urban public transport trends in five western international metropolises: A post-pandemic perspective*

Andreea Melinescu and Sina Cosmulescu. *Determination of CO2 stored by fruit trees in Craiova, Romania cityscape*

Jose Luis de Diego Vega. *Comparative analysis of the implementation of the 15-minute city philosophy in different cities around the world*

Soledad Camacho Lorenzo, Joan Alberich González and Yolanda Pérez Albert. *Climate justice and environmental equity: an analysis of extreme heat exposure in the city of Montevideo, Uruguay*

Carolina A. Quintero Sandrea, M. Yolanda Pérez A., Marianela Camacho and Arturo Frediani. *The Soundscape in Cultural Ecosystem Services in Urban Areas Surrounding Petrochemical Complexes.*

Francisco Manuel Martínez García and Montaña Jiménez-Espada. *Geostatistical comparative analysis of sustainability indicators at urban level*

Moumita Roy, Zereen Tanha and Sarah B. Haque. *Prospects of integrating publicly accessible urban green space for enhancing livability of a commercial area: Case study on Chaktai, Chattogram, Bangladesh*

SPATIAL ANALYSIS SESSIONS

Adarsh Kumar and Vishal Chetty. *Land Cover Change and Urban Heat Island Trends in Varanasi, India from 1991-2021 using Geoinformatics*

Qiang Liu, Zhengming Zhu, Congying Fang and Qiaoling Fang. *Spatial Regression Modeling of Bus Ridership Using Smart Card Data and Various Built Environmental Features*

Álvaro Bernabeu-Bautista, Mariana Huskinson and Leticia Serrano-Estrada. *Presence and economic activity in the tourist city through Social Media Data. Benidorm (Spain) and Balneário Camboriú (Brazil) as case studies*

Tesfaye Admasu, John Lupala, and Fredrick Magina. *Geography of Housing Markets in Spatio-temporal Perspective: The Case of Residential Land in Hawassa City, Ethiopia*

Jyoti Yadav, Niruti Gupta and Sushmi Nimje. *Assessing Spatial Inequalities of Public Green Space Accessibility Using GIS: A Case of Lucknow City, India*

Ginevra Balletto, Mara Ladu, Virginia Sole, Martina Sinatra, Giuseppe Borruso. *Geospatial analysis techniques for tourist flows. Sardinia study region (Italy)*

Zihao Xu, Jing Liang. *Understanding the determinants of built environments on Free Floating Bike-Sharing in the CBD: A case study of Shenzhen*

Sana Ghezali, Mohamed Amine Boukhemacha. *Spatiotemporal change analysis and ANN/CCI LC products-based future predictions of land use and landcover: Algiers city (Algeria) case study*

Kinga Milewska and Marcin Świtoniak. *Application of soil research and low-altitude photogrammetry in precision agriculture and fertilizer management*

Celio Daroncho, João Augusto Dunck Dalosto and Pedro Jose Perez Martinez. *Analyzing Historical Trends in Trip Generation by Primary Modes of Transport in the Metropolitan Region of São Paulo between 1967 and 2017*

Iman Noor, Muhammad Saad Bin Tariq, Syeda Maria Zafar, Junaid Aziz Khan and WajidUllah Shah. *Using Unmanned Aerial Vehicle for Cadastral Mapping and Urban Planning: A Spatial Approach to Automate Land Parcel Extraction*

MISCELLANEOUS SESSIONS

Annunziata Palermo, Lucia Chieffallo and Gaetano Tucci. *Analysis of Spanish health services for the identification of good practices for Italian small and medium-sized centres*

Margarita Martínez-Díaz. *Sustainable urban planning for all: paving the way for equitable mobility*

Alba Ramírez-Saiz. *Crossings between blindness and riders: Atlas on different solutions and its suitability to handle the conflict between people with visual disability and bike lanes.*

Clara Stella Vicari Aversa. *What is innovation in architectural and urban design in waterfront cities?*

Haiyan Gu and Skirmantė Mozūriūnaitė. *A novel design-based framework for enhancing the application of urban design in the CIM platform*

Amelia Pérez García. *European programmes as a driving force for the transformation of cities: Study on their application in the Region of Murcia (Spain)*

Rosalía Pacheco-Torres, Sara El Sayed Brighech and Eulalia Jadraque Gago. *Building Energy Retrofit with Sustainable Materials: case study of Orcasitas Neighbourhood in Madrid*

Adirane Calvo, Álvaro Sicilia and Leandro Madrazo. *A Multidimensional Approach to enhance sustainable Building Renovation planning: The RETABIT Project*

Alberto Garcia-Marin, Juan-Manuel Sanchez-la-Chica, Jorge Barrios-Corpas and Maria-Jose Marquez-Ballesteros. *A new model of building elements reutilization at the University Campus*

Celio Daroncho and Pedro José Perez Martinez. *Changing urban mobility habits in São Paulo: An analysis from 2017 to 2022*

Federico Camerin and Rafael Córdoba Hernández. *The disposal of military sites in Spain today. Challenges and limitations towards a sustainable urban development*

Shruti Sidhu. *Smart Cities and Sustainable Urban Planning: A Systemic Review and Bibliometric Analysis*

Aung Tun Lin and Kaiwen Yao. *Involuntary Resettlement Outcomes of Myitsone, Upper Paunglaung and Tha Htay Hydropower Projects: A comparative study in Myanmar*



What is innovation in architectural and urban design in waterfront cities?

Clara Stella Vicari Aversa ¹ *

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Abstract: The world is changing rapidly and the need to adopt sustainable behaviour is increasingly urgent, not just in architecture. Is it possible to innovate while making conscious and responsible choices? Technological innovation is not necessarily green and alone is not the solution to problems but, paradoxically, if not well directed, it can become a problem to solutions. Innovation is just a tool and, to be truly sustainable, must start from design. In this context, the concrete case of water cities is analysed. They require a peculiar approach precisely because of the presence of the water element.

Keywords: Waterfront Regeneration, Waterfront Sustainability, Architectural and Urban Regeneration, Architectural innovation, Fake innovation

1. Introduction. The responsibility for innovation that is not always green.

Architecture is in its essence the management and construction of space. The *punctum dolens* is that space is a very precious material and, overwhelmed by the race for the latest innovation, we are all losing the ability and skill to shape it. The world is changing rapidly, and the need, not only in architecture, to adopt sustainable behaviour is increasingly evident and urgent. Is it possible to innovate while making conscious and responsible choices? There is no doubt that construction is a key sector for the economy and for the achievement of an emission-free world and that, in this field, innovation, industrialisation, digitalisation, and sustainability, with the consequent application of cutting-edge technologies, methods and systems, allows an exponential leap forward. But we must be aware that technological innovation is not necessarily green. Innovation alone is not the 'solution to problems'; paradoxically, if not well addressed and conveyed, it can become a 'problem to solutions'. It is precisely in construction and architecture, unfortunately, that in recent years we often witness pseudo eco-initiatives because of poorly used materials or the choice to build forgetting the techniques of the past to insert technological innovations where they are not needed. Urban and architectural design and microclimate are closely related. The real challenge today is not just knowing new technologies, but knowing how to combine them skilfully. Innovation is just a tool that needs to be known, addressed and controlled. It is a cultural challenge that requires knowledge and a love of architecture. Architectural and urban design must not chase innovation. The role of the architect is precisely this: to check at all times that innovation remains green, that from an equation it does not become an inequation. Unfortunately, in recent years, particularly in the design the micro and macro architecture of private individuals, we see surreal interventions such as: thermal insulation (only suitable for certain locations) on stone structures in Sicily by the sea (which will age easily as well as not living healthily);

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constructing winter gardens in terraces facing south, instead of creating shading or pergolas, and then having to put the air conditioner; realising interior distribution without controlling natural light, exposure and ventilation; elaborate technological research that results in the invention of skins that nullify the dialogue between the building's façade and its interior character, thus realising envelopes that dialogue more (if it goes well) with the outside world than with the interior space (but architecture is like a body and the skin must be an integral part of it and must be appropriate to the context); making vegetal walls or adding trees on balconies, believing that is enough to be green, almost wearing vegetal burqas, as if this is what makes an architecture green or beautiful. *"A doctor can bury his mistakes but an architect can only advise his client to plant vines,"* F. L. Wright argued. A new fashion, 'vegetecture' as G. Peluffo calls it, adding that *"No building can be so weak that it needs to represent an ecological awareness that is now obvious and inevitable."* Even worse is to do this where there is a shortage of water. If maintaining the vegetation unreasonably affects costs and resources, perhaps we have missed a few steps. We have gone at the opposite to the one of sustainability we were trying to pursue [1].

It is often enough to go back to common sense, good building skills, traditional forms of ventilation and cooling and/or the need for heat storage that is perfectly compatible with architecture. The real challenge today is not only to know the new technologies but to know how to combine them wisely. The results of many projects show that just that caught up in the eagerness for the new, we often paradoxically find ourselves with architecture that suddenly grows old easily. Innovating does not necessarily, or only, mean resorting to domotics, BIM or green roofing, thus thinking of doing architecture or solving problems. It means starting again from the knowledge handed down from the past, often preserved in many cases of popular architecture, to translate it, thanks to new tools, into the new architecture. It is not possible to have a single, innovative answer for everyone. Let us think, for example, of the Greek-Roman Theatre in Taormina, set in a panoramic spot that is not only marvellous but always naturally ventilated because the Greeks and Romans knew where how, and with what orientation to build. Sustainability was not the result of mechanical calculations but of ancient knowledge and common sense. These are passed on, studied, immediately reusable, and they do not need to be disposed of. And we should set aside this ancient knowledge? No, true innovation is to pass them on, innovating them.

Urban and architectural design and the microclimate are closely related. Various and varied can be suggestions for promoting a sustainable project, something to which the importance of the choice of materials must necessarily be connected. In this the architect must operate like a chef, preferably working with local raw materials, thinking about their availability. The process of cooking has much to do with designing and building. One must always think of the best ingredients and with the necessary, never something more or less. You always have to control the time, the process, the various steps, and the moments when more dedication is required during placement. And, just as it is not an appliance without the rest that makes a dinner party, similarly it is not innovation that makes an architecture. Perhaps this gives a better idea of what innovation is. There are some examples realised thanks to designers who have managed to apply this approach; the world's greenest waste-

to-energy plant (CopenHill waste-to-energy plant, Copenhagen, 2019, by BIG & SLA) or redeveloping a former coal-fired power station, the largest brick building in Europe. (Battersea Power Station, WilkinsonEyre, London, 2022, masterplan by R. Viñoly).

2. What to (try to) do?

Keeping the memory active [2], knowing the past to advance in the future through ductility. Design can only be developed through a profound and conscious knowledge of the past, prodromal to the design of the future. Cleverly combining, as a part absorbed by the designer like the sun tanning the skin, the past with the present of technologies with the aim not to show off one's own culture, which must remain in the background, between the lines, of the design. E. N. Rogers questioned the importance of tradition and environmental pre-existences and wondered how new architecture could be at the same time a spokesman of its time and fit harmoniously into the existing historical fabric, tradition and history. With knowledge and ... innovation. *"To learn history to the point of forgetting it. Like when you learn the normal rules of mathematics and geometry"* [3].

This same approach, obviously to be calibrated on a case-by-case basis, cannot then suddenly be lost when focusing on coastal communities and cities [4]. They require a peculiar approach precisely because of the presence of the element water. This on the one hand, can be an obvious resource and facilitate sustainability in urban recovery and regeneration projects but, on the other hand, can sometimes prove to be a complication that, if poorly managed, can cause some green and sustainable solutions to turn out to be unusable or aberrant. Yet, studying them, to an attentive eye accustomed to reading them, can often be much simpler than one would think. One has to go to their inner nature. Are they predominantly port cities? Open or closed to the sea? Fluvial? Lakeside? Tourist cities? Beach towns? According to the UN-Habitat Programme, as many as two out of every five people in the world live within 100 km of the coast and 90 per cent of megacities are vulnerable to sea-level rise. A study published in the scientific journal *Nature Communications* indicates that between 1993 and 2015, the risk of coastal flooding had increased by almost 50 per cent globally. The future of our coasts does not look too optimistic. This means that these people, along with their homes, businesses and communities, may soon no longer exist due to the accelerating impacts of climate change. While facing the greatest risks, coastal cities are home to 11 per cent of the world's population. In this perspective, the climate crisis is showing its negative effects. The latest report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concludes that the world temperature is already 1.1°C above pre-industrial levels and is likely to exceed the critical tipping point of 1.5°C by 2035. Rising sea levels threaten one hundred million people in coastal communities. [5]. Climate change is, therefore, a peculiar threat to coastal cities amplified by the rapid rate of urbanisation [6]. Such a context makes clear the contemporary design complexity in coastal cities whose urban spaces on the edge are almost always their most identifiable spaces. Only in this way it will be possible to consolidate social, economic and environmental benefits by achieving interaction between man and his surroundings, as well as aesthetics and sight [7].

Such reasoning can be exemplified with a recent project in Palermo, Sicily, the Palermo Marina Yachting (PMY), a new piece, after the Foro Italico spaces, of an "all Port" city that had been raped on the maritime edge over the years. Time will confirm the effectiveness of the intervention, but one fact is already consolidated. An area, that of the Castle by the sea, has been symbolically enhanced, conserving and symbolically enhancing its trapezoidal shape, recovering its historical heritage and integrating it with the needs of modern cruise tourism (with the related logistics) and tourism, not only exogenous, that is, from outside the city, but also endogenous, making it a place for the people of Palermo to 'take a trip out of town' on their sea (Figure 1).



Figure 1. Palermo Marina Yachting (PMY), Render. Source: Giornale della Vela. Photo, November 2023, by Giuseppe Vicari.

3. Conclusion. So what is innovation in architecture in seaside cities and what is the role of the architect?

It is knowing how to put the "pieces together", as Ludovico Quaroni wrote, even those distant from each other to move forward. "*The realisation of a precise building design introduces into the existing environment an alteration that will be all the greater the larger the area directly affected and the greater the difference between volumes, surfaces, lines, colours ...*" [8]. Innovation, especially on the varied but delicate edge between land and sea, urged by opposing tensions, is to elaborate a project that is sustainable because it is aware of the complexity, with the help of the new tools, without using them unconditionally, but with judgement, like a chef to ensure that the result is the best possible for all. This is how the extraordinary polyphonic energy of architecture is experienced.

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